

Claims 1, 7-12 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Giroux et al. Claims 1, 7-12 and 14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Watson et al. (European Patent 697,496 to Halliburton Company). In addition, claims 10 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by either of Bradley or McMullin.

Claims 2-6 and 13 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claims 15-34 are allowable over the prior art of record.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the alternative limitations of objected claims 2 and 6, and therefore, is submitted to be in condition for allowance.

Claim 10 has been amended to include the limitations of objected claim 13 as well as intervening claim 12, and therefore, is submitted to be in condition for allowance.

New independent claim 44 has been added to further define Applicant's invention and is submitted to be in condition for allowance. More particularly, claim 44 is directed to a plug for use in a well casing that includes a shearable member or non-

shearable disk disposed in a central opening thereof for at least temporary closure of the opening. Claims 45-56 depend from claim 44 and are likewise submitted to be in condition for allowance.

New independent claim 57 has been added to further define Applicant's invention and is submitted to be in condition for allowance. More particularly, claim 57 is directed to a plug for use in a well casing that includes an insert positioned for at least temporary closure of a central opening therein. The insert having an outer ring portion and an inner portion extending from the outer ring portion wherein the inner portion is thinner than the outer ring portion. Claims 57-65 depend from claim 57 and are likewise submitted to be in condition for allowance.

It is respectfully requested that the rejection of claims 1, 7-12 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

Claims 2, 6, 12 and 13 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer; claims 1 and 10 have been amended; and new claims 44-56 have been added. It is respectfully submitted that claims 1, 3-5, 7-11, 14-34 and 44-65 are now in condition for allowance. This is intended to be a complete response to the Office Action mailed June 12, 2000 and the allowance of claims 1, 3-5, 7-11, 14-34 and 44-65 is requested.



Respectfully submitted,

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on July 24, 2000.

Sheila D. Gibbs